

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1-4, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19 and 25, and add new claims 26-31, as shown in the claims listed below.

1. (Currently amended) A method for providing a ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance to a mammalian eye having an internal limiting membrane, the method comprising:

visualizing the internal limiting membrane of the eye;

locating the ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance between the internal limiting membrane and the retina; and

using the internal limiting membrane to secure the ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance.

2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance comprises a drug.

3. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance comprises a device.

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 3 wherein the device is comprises an at least one array for electrostimulation of the retina.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein the device has external connectors.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the substance is in a delivery vehicle.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the delivery vehicle is selected from the group consisting of a capsule, a bead, a liposome, a sphere, a dissolvable biocompatible polymer sheet, and combinations thereof.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the delivery vehicle provides slow-release drug delivery.

9. (Currently amended) A method for effecting treatment of a retina in a mammal comprising providing a therapeutic or preventive ~~retinal stimulator and drug~~ substance between an internal limiting membrane and the retina to contact the retina and stimulate ~~visual perception~~ retinal cells to effect treatment ~~of vision~~.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the treatment effected is for a condition selected from the group consisting of retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, a degenerative retinal disease, and combinations thereof.

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the substance ~~is a~~ comprises at least one semiconductor microphotodiode array.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the substance ~~is an~~ comprises at least one electrode array.

13. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~22~~ 9 wherein the substance ~~is~~ comprises a vehicle containing a drug.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13 wherein the drug is selected from the group consisting of an α -adrenergic agonist, a β -adrenergic agonist, an antiinflammatory agent, an antiproliferative agent, and combinations thereof.

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 wherein the ~~visual perception is~~ retinal cells stimulated ~~by stimulating cells that~~ are selected from the group consisting of photoreceptor cells, ganglion cells, neurofiber cells, and combinations thereof.

16. (Original) A method for enhancing vision in a patient having decreased vision due to retinal pathology or injury comprising locating a retinal stimulator substance between an internal limiting membrane and the retina, the substance capable of stimulating the retina to enhance visual function.

17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein the substance comprises ~~is~~ a photostimulated semiconductor microphotodiode array.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17 further comprising providing a light source to stimulate the array.

19. (Currently amended) The method of claim 16 wherein the substance comprises is an electrically stimulated electrode array.

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 further comprising providing an electrical source to stimulate the array.

21. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the patient has a retinal pathology selected from the group consisting of retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, a retinal degenerative disease, and combinations thereof.

22. (Previously presented) A method for effecting treatment of a retina in a mammal comprising providing a retinal chemical stimulator between an internal limiting membrane and the retina to contact the retina and stimulate retinal cells to effect treatment.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14 wherein the drug affects retinal degeneration.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14 wherein the drug is regenerative.

25. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the ~~retinal stimulator~~ substance comprises a drug and a device.

26. (New) A method for effecting a therapeutic or preventive treatment of a retina in a mammal comprising providing at least one connectionless array between an internal limiting membrane and the retina to contact the retina and stimulate retinal cells to effect the treatment.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein the at least one connectionless array comprises at least one photostimulated array.

28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein the at least one photostimulated array comprises at least one semiconductor microphotodiode array.

29. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the substance comprises at least one connectionless array.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein the at least one connectionless array comprises at least one photostimulated array.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein the at least one photostimulated array comprises at least one semiconductor microphotodiode array.

REMARKS

Prior to entry of this amendment, claims 1-21 were pending. With this amendment, claims 1-4, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19 and 25 have been amended, and new claims 26-31 have also been presented.

I. Amendments to Claims 1-4, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 19 and 25

Claims 1-3 and 25 have been amended to substitute “substance” for “retinal stimulator” to clarify the claim language and bring it in conformance with the terminology used in the specification (see, for example, paragraphs 9-10 and 24-27 of the original specification). Claims 4, 11 and 12 have been amended to indicate that the substance may be at least one array. Support for this may be found, for example, at paragraph 26 of the original specification. Claims 9 and 15 have been amended to substantially their originally filed state by reestablishing that retinal cells are stimulated by the substance provided between the internal limiting membrane and the retina. Claim 13 has been amended to depend from claim 9 rather than claim 22. The remaining amendments to the claims relate to grammatical clarifications and do not narrow the scope of any of the claims. Applicant submits that these amended claims are at least as broad as the original claims and that the amendments are fully supported in the specification as identified above. Consideration and allowance of these claims is respectfully solicited.

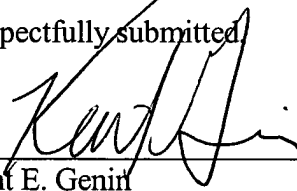
II. New Claims 26-31

New claims 26-28 relate to a method for therapeutic or preventive treatment of a retina where a connectionless array is provided between the internal limiting membrane and the retina to stimulate retinal cells. Claim 26 is an independent claim and claims 27-28 depend from claim 26. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added and that support for these claims may be found, for example, in paragraph 26 of the originally filed specification. New claims 29-31 depend from independent claim 1 and recite features where the substance is a connectionless array.

III. Conclusion

With the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that claims 1-31 are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. If any questions arise or issues remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below in order to expedite disposition of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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